

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I commend our colleague, the Senator from South Dakota, Senator JOHNSON, for drawing the attention of this body to the extraordinary tragedy in South Dakota. I think all of us were stunned to see those photos of this town, the town of Spencer, which was just wiped out. It really is stunning to see the complete devastation of that small town.

I remember seeing the press reports and seeing the pictures and being reminded of the devastation we suffered in North Dakota last year with the 500-year flood, on top of the worst winter in history, the most powerful winter storm in 50 years, and in the middle of all that, the fires that destroyed much of downtown Grand Forks, ND.

Our hearts go out to the people of South Dakota. Our hearts go out to the people who have suffered this extraordinary tragedy, to those who lost their lives, to those whose lives have been disrupted forever. And I think it is important for them to know that those in this body on both sides of the aisle will reach out and will help. We certainly saw that in our tragedy, and we will never forget the assistance of our colleagues. We want our friends in the South Dakota delegation to know that we are prepared to help and to reach out and to be of assistance, just as they were of help to us in our disaster. So we want to say to our colleague, Senator JOHNSON, when you are back home talking to the people who have suffered, they can count on this Federal Government to reach out and be there to help in their time of need, just as they were there to help others when they were afflicted.

I also want to say to Senator DASCHLE, the other Senator from South Dakota, obviously, those of us in the Dakotas have a special bond. We will do everything we can to help as you go through this difficult process of rebuilding.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, it is interesting how each of our States has experienced disasters in the last several years—you a 500-year flood, we a 500-year flood, and now this devastating tornado. In April, we have had four natural disasters in Georgia: a flood, an early freeze wiping out the entire first peach crop, and three separate tornadoes. No matter how many times you experience it, the power of it is just mind-boggling. I remember years and years ago, on the eve of my high school graduation in Lee's Summit, MO, being hit by one of these tornadoes that leveled 700 homes to the foundation. I have never seen anything like it. It was like a bomb hit.

You are right. All of our colleagues have been so responsive, and it makes an enormous difference when you are faced with that kind of situation when neighbors and friends across the country are there to help. So I appreciate the remarks of the Senator from South Dakota and the Senator from North Dakota.

## CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time for morning business is closed.

### NATIONAL TOBACCO POLICY AND YOUTH SMOKING REDUCTION ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1415.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1415) to reform and restructure the processes by which tobacco products are manufactured, marketed, and distributed, to prevent the use of tobacco products by minors, to redress the adverse health effects of tobacco use, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Gregg/Leahy amendment No. 2433 (to Amendment No. 2420), to modify the provisions relating to civil liability for tobacco manufacturers.

Gregg/Leahy amendment No. 2434 (to Amendment No. 2433), in the nature of a substitute.

Gramm motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Finance with instructions to report back forthwith, with amendment No. 2436, to modify the provisions relating to civil liability for tobacco manufacturers, and to eliminate the marriage penalty reflected in the standard deduction and to ensure the earned income credit takes into account the elimination of such penalty.

Daschle (for Durbin) amendment No. 2437 (to amendment No. 2436), relating to reductions in underage tobacco usage.

Lott (for Coverdell) modified amendment No. 2451 (to amendment No. 2437), to stop illegal drugs from entering the United States, to provide additional resources to combat illegal drugs, and to establish disincentives for teenagers to use illegal drugs.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2451

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, we are returning to the tobacco legislation, by previous order, and specifically to the amendment that I introduced last evening along with Senator CRAIG of Idaho and Senator ABRAHAM of Michigan, which is now commonly called the drug amendment.

To put this in context, Mr. President, the point that we are making is that you cannot talk about teen addiction and be silent on the No. 1 teen addiction problem, which is drug abuse. So the purpose of this amendment is to make certain that any legislation being considered by this Chamber about teen addiction and teen problems must also include a title to deal with the raging epidemic in our country—teenage drug abuse.

Mr. President, in the last 6½ years, teenage drug abuse has increased by 135 percent. Well, what does that mean? Does that mean that 10 more youngsters are using drugs than were 6 years ago? No. It means that almost 2 million teenagers are using drugs today that were not 6½ years ago.

This is a massive problem and it is a consequence, unfortunately, of altered Federal policy. We decided early in this administration that the battle against

drug abuse would be altered, changed, downsized. The drug office was virtually closed, interdiction facilities were drastically reduced, the Coast Guard was diminished in the Caribbean, and we quit talking about the problem. Simultaneously, we entered into new trade agreements with Mexico, which enormously increased the amount of travel between the two countries, upwards to 4 million vehicles now. So that interdiction apparatus was down and the transportation across the border was up, and we quit talking about the problem. Well, consequently, massive amounts of new drugs came into the country, and because they were coming in such quantities, the price fell. So we had a product that was everywhere, inexpensive, and very, very dangerous.

You can go into any school in the Nation and ask students and they can tell you the name of all these designer drugs; they can tell you exactly where to buy them, and in most cases, it doesn't take over 30 minutes. As I have said, the price plummeted 50, 60, 70 percent. Dropped interdiction, increased border crossings, flooded the market with drugs, the price falls, and the targets are kids, age 8 to 14 years of age. What happened? It doubled and almost tripled drug abuse among teenagers.

Today, in high schools across the country, one in four are using drugs regularly. In junior high, it is 1 in 10. We now have almost 2 million more kids caught up in this lethal snare, drug abuse. To be specific about the numbers, in 1979 at the peak of the last epidemic, 14.1 percent of the entire teenage population ages 12 to 17 was using drugs regularly. The Nation said we can't tolerate this. And from the President to the sheriff, the whole Nation began to fight this epidemic. And what happened?

By 1992, we had reduced drug use among this population by two-thirds. Instead of 3.3 million teenagers using drugs, we drove it down to 1 million. This is very important because it demonstrates that we can correct this problem. There are some in our society, and very powerful people, who would like Americans to believe you can't do anything about this. That is an utter absurdity. We have proven, and very recently, that you can attack this problem and make a difference. But in 1992, as I said a moment ago, we quit talking about the problem. And so today, 2 million-plus are back using drugs regularly. It is a very, very disturbing situation. It just sort of snuck up on us.

A lot of our parents are not talking to their children about this problem, which is very unfortunate, because we know that if parents are talking to their children about this issue, the odds of the children using drugs are cut in half. It is cut in half. But if you went into a classroom, and there are 100 students out there, and say, "How many of you talk to your parents about this problem?" you would be lucky if 10